Revisiting the Corporate Culture of Pakistan: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life and Employee Performance

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Abstract

The article attempts to investigate the influence of organizational culture on performance of employees in banking sector of Pakistan. The descriptive pattern is used in the study and data is collected through questionnaires. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to personnel and company officers by mail and through personal visits. We received back 150 questionnaires indicating a response rate of 75%. Questionnaires, comprising two parts were sent directly to the targeted segments. The 1st set of Questions pertained to personal and organizational profiles. Second part consisted of twenty questions based on the Denison organizational culture survey concerning employee participation, openness to communication, risk-taking & innovation, customer service orientation and reward system. And the last part related to fourteen questions of employee performance. Regression analysis has been used in the study. The overall model is significant and organizational culture has strong linkage with the employee performance. The study highlights the organizational culture is a vital ingredient in the success of employees. Core organizational culture typically emphasizes special themes such as performance excellence, effective integration, worker's involvement, and orientation towards organizational objectives.

Keywords: Culture, Employee Performance, Banking Sector

1. Introduction

Culture is an arrangement of different attributes that express an organization and differentiate the firm from other one Forehand and von Gilmer (1964). In the early 1980's, organizational culture became central concern in the study of organizational behavior. Hundreds of researchers began to work in this area. Numerous books were published; important academic journals decided entire issues to the discussion of culture. Businesses expressed an interest in culture that was far more intense than their concerns with other aspects of organizational behavior. Business week,

Fortune and other business periodicals published articles that claimed culture was essential to an organization's success and suggested that managers who could manage through their organization's culture almost certainly would rise to the top Moorhead and Griffin (1995).

The proposition explored in this paper is that, there are theoretical and empirical reasons to believe that culture of an organization influences the way people of that organization behaves and perform their jobs. This proposition is an element of the larger debate over the relationship between performance and organizational culture. The nexus of employee performance and organizational culture explored in this paper is of the core value. To understand the link between job performance and organizational culture is an important research topic because employee work performance is essential for organizational success particularly for the banking firms. Therefore, a culture of open communication and participation is must for efficiency, flexibility, learning and innovation.

Organizational culture has received much attention in organizational behavior literatures, because of the key role it plays in determining levels of organizational outcomes. But still the field of organizational culture research is at a very early stage and much of the work done has emphasized on organizational performance rather than focusing specifically on employee's job performance. In Pakistan very little work has been done on the culture of organizations. In most of the organizations not only employees but management also does not have a clear understanding of corporate culture and how their core values influence their employees and organizational performance. To the best of author's knowledge it is the first work done in Pakistan to identify the impact of organizational culture on performance of banks employees.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Organizational Culture

In every organization, there is a system or pattern of values, symbols, rituals, myths and practices that have evolved over time. The shared values determine in large degree, what employees see and how they respond to their world. The organizational culture suggests employees the way things should be done Robbins and Coultar (1996).

2.2 Employee Performance

For at least forty years behavioral scientists have been studying managerial effectiveness. Research projects, statistical analysis, psychological tests, theories of leadership and training theories all have tried to define the high performing manager. But still for all the frustrating attempts of behavioral researches to analyze and classify the elements of the manager's performance, precious little is known about what should be referred as high performance Albrecht (1978). According to Campbell, performance may simply be defined as observable things people do, that are relevant to the goals of the organization Campbell et al, (1990). For John Correll, performance is human action and any outcomes that directly derive from it. Action can take the form of either a single activity or set of related activities. Mental and verbal processes such as decision-making and conversation are form of activity. An outcome is an object, condition, or situation resulting from human action Correll (2004).

<center>Action + Outcomes = Performance</center>

Apart from these, in light of a company's goals, there are two categories of job performance. Performance that an organization wants to occur is referred as desired performance. Typically, it's a performance that contributes to achievement of company's goals. It is also called productive or good performance. Conversely, any unwanted performance that does not contribute to achievement of organizational goals is called undesired, inadequate or poor performance. Every employee in the organization is either engaged in a desired performance or undesired performance. There is no such thing as 'no' performance Correll (2004).

But on the other hand, some other theoretical and empirical work suggests that 'contextual' or 'extra-role' performance should also be included in the conceptualization of job performance. The contextual performance refers to the 'organization citizenship behavior' (OCB). This additional domain of job behavior is thought to be more discretionary and consequently more heavily influenced by a person's belief and attitude Brown, Diefendorff, Kamin and Lord (2002). According to Susan Mohammad (2002) task performance bears a direct relation to the organization's technical core, either by executing its technical processes or by maintaining and servicing its technical requirements. This task performance can further be divided into two types (1) technical-administrative task performance, and (2) leadership task performance. However, contextual performance refers to outcomes of behaviors

that are needed to support the social fabric of the organization. These behaviors are not unique to a specific job but rather inherent in all jobs Witt, Kacmar, Carlson & Zivnuska (2002). Borman and Motowildo's (1993), early description of contextual performance also includes behaviors such as employee willingness to follow rules, persist, volunteer, help and cooperate.

But an employee performance is dependent on the organization. Therefore, to achieve desired performance an organization must provide enough resources to the employees so that they can perform better. Resources include material, financing, relevant information and technology. Other than resources the manager must explain the employees that what action and outcomes constitute desired performance. Apart from, resources the employee's own ability and motivation to perform a task is also necessary Correll (2004).

2.3 Influence of Culture on Performance

The important role that culture plays in human behavior may be one of the most underrated concepts in the behavior sciences. Culture dictates what people learn and how they behave Luthans (1985). Culture effects employee performance by programming people to behave in ways that are more or less effective in terms of performance. Culture provides a 'tool kit' of stories; rituals, symbols and worldviews that people often use to construct ways of ordering their behavior Swidler (1986).

Corporate culture gives an important meaning and direction to the day-to-day activities of its members. It serves as a background force and has a potential to shape behavior, reinforce common beliefs and encourage members to apply their efforts to accomplish important organizational objectives. Strong cultures commit and reinforce members to do things for and with one another that are considered to be in the best interest of organizational objectives Schemer horn (1996). According to Stephen Robbins, the organizational culture can constraint managers decision making options in all management functions which include planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Another viewpoint says that cultures affect performance because it affects how people think, feel, and act and helps them to determine the situation in which they act. In more scientific terms culture influences people's cognition, affective states, and behaviors, many of which have implications for work performance. Cultures also contribute schemes and scripts that can affect performance by providing preexisting ways of understanding what is occurring, how to evaluate it, and what sequences of action are appropriate to the situation Wilkins, Ouchi (1983). As research on strategic decision-making has shown that different managers may interpret identical events as opportunities or threats and that these interpretations, in turn, are related to the actions taken Dutton and Jackson (1987). Employees committed to an organization are dedicated because they care about their organization's fate, and their caring heightens the power of organizational norms to control their behavior. In this way the ability of culture to create commitment may affect its effectiveness in eliciting high performance from its members O'Reilly (1989).

2.3.1 Employee Participation

"Employee participation embraces employees in the organizational decision making on a collective basis. Involvement appertains to management initiated arrangements focused on the individual, with tight constrains on empowerment of employees and not including organizational decision making" (Armstrong, 2005; Gennard and Judge, 2005; Lewis et al, 2003, cited in, Murdoch, p.3, 2007). Participation in the most meaningful sense for management means the best use of the available human resources, confidence in the capacities and ideas of people and sincerity in extending significant opportunities for true participation of all group members Mc Farland (1974). McGregor states that participation is not just a group process of expressing democratic ideas but it also involves delegating tasks and responsibilities to individual subordinates.

In Durbin's (1982) view, participation also includes employee involvement in setting goals. As according to goal setting theory participation increases goal acceptance. Due to this goal acceptance the employees work more hard to achieve them than those who are simply assigned goals. Performance may simply be defined as observable things people do, that are relevant to the goals of the organization Campbell et al, (1990). Employee-centered management has its origins in organization culture theories that recognize that employees add value to the organization beyond their mere physical labor, and that employees need to have involvement in what happens in the workplace in order to achieve their highest productivity. To explain this idea, Douglas McGregor in 1960 developed his famous Theory X and Theory Y to explain 'The Human Side of Enterprise'.

Involvement = Team Orientation + Empowerment + Capability Development

2.3.2 Openness to Communication

Fundamentally, organizations are systems that are formed by networks of communication linking people and resources and giving their relationships and interactions meaning, shape and direction. Most organizational work is accomplished by people stating or listening messages, raising or answering questions, issuing or following directions, presenting or fulfilling requests, making commitment Cloke and Goldsmith (2002). Effective communication is a basic prerequisite for the attainment of organizational objectives. Some estimates of its use to go up to about three-fourths of an active human being's life and even higher proportion of as manager's work. Effective communication is so important that its ineffectiveness may result in industrial disputes, rumors, miscommunication and organizational conflicts Luthans (1998). Organizations have unique communication systems. Organizations communicate externally with their environment and internally through specific systems. Researchers have identified five basic communication systems downward communication, upward communication, horizontal communication, grapevine and networks. These five systems can be broadly categorized into formal and informal communication. The grapevine and networks comes in informal whereas the other three comes in the formal communication category. Within these categories communication may be divided into two characteristic forms, i-e oral and written. Written communication is most commonly used in the organizations Towes (1998).

2.3.3 Risk Taking and Innovation

In a dynamic world of global competition, organizations must create new products and services and adopt state of the art technology if they are going to compete successfully. Innovation is different from creativity. Kuhl (1985) suggested "creativity forms something from nothing whereas innovation shapes that something into products and services". Similarly, Badawy wrote "creativity brings something new into being while innovation brings something new into use". As Bucker (1997) suggests, "Innovation is an environment, a culture-an almost spiritual force--that exists in a company and drives value creation".

2.3.4 Customer Service Orientation

Schneider, Banjamin and Bowen (1985) have produces a series of studies and papers that reveal the kinds of practices and procedures that characterized a culture for service. When employees view their organization's practices and procedures as treating them well and providing a sense of community at work, customers report they receive high-quality service. Also when customers say a service organization delivers high service quality, employee describe their organization as being equally concerned with retaining current customers and attracting new consumers. In organizations that deliver service rated as superior by customers, employees say they are well trained, and that the equipment and supplies they work with are up-to-date and well serviced.

In the old economy, it was a buyer's market and companies had their pick of the best talent. But in our economy, it is a seller's market in which companies compete to find, attract and retain the best people. As a result, many companies are beginning to take a more serious and disciplined look at the principles and science of retention and talent management. With the increasing demand for managers and experienced employees and the shrinking supply, organizational leaders are wrestling with critical questions like, "How can we develop our cultures to attract, evaluate, reward and retain the best people?" Joel & Levey (2000).

2.3.5 Reward System

A key to the whole attitude for an organization revolves around its reward practices. Because of this, job attitudes such as job satisfaction can be utilized as a set of indicators of and organization's ability to motivate its employees. There are different types of rewards. The rewards can be divided into two main categories. The extrinsic rewards such as monetary gains; and intrinsic rewards such as praise, recognition, opportunities for advancement etc. The most commonly used extrinsic rewards are the Pay-for-performance program where the employees are paid on the basis of their performance. The other common type of reward includes piece-rate plan, wage incentives, profit sharing, bonuses, employee stock ownership plans, gain sharing and so on. All of these rewards can have a considerable effect on employee performance.

Different theories have recognized the need of rewards in influencing performance in a number of different ways. For Maslow and Alfred, rewards should satisfy the lower needs as well as Herzberg's hygiene factors. According to

McClelland the rewards should be designed to provide the reinforcement that a worker most desires and value. The equity theory suggests that the rewards should pass the test of equality, both in comparison to other organizations and within the organization itself. The reinforcement theory states that the rewards should be used to reinforce appropriate behaviors only and reinforces for undesirable performance should be removed Bovee et al, (1993). Thus in providing rewards and developing reward culture the managers should be very aware of the workers needs. In today's global world there is no such thing as 'one fits for all'. The reward given should be one that is most desirable to a worker for performing the job well. Here an important question to be addressed by the managers is that how much the employee values various possible rewards. By recognizing this question the organization may be able to provide the rewards that can best elicit high performance from the employees. Thus the challenge for management is to eliminate the rein forcers for undesirable behavior while reward the desired output.

As mentioned in the earlier chapters the purpose of study is to relate culture with job performance. Thus apart from culture variables that enhance performance we must be concerned with the job performance factors that have been found important while determining the performance of an employee. While the idea of organizational culture raises many interesting questions and appears to have significance both in practical and theoretical areas, little attention has been paid to it in research efforts. Further identification and measurement of the critical dimension will be needed. Meanwhile, one may speculate that in organizational culture lie much of significance for the understanding of such matters as communications, creativity and innovation, effectiveness, stability and other characteristics of organizations.

2.4 Hypothesis

The study tests the following hypothesis in the context of Pakistani banking industry. Efforts have been made to collect maximum data / information related to the selected sample so that the results may be as representative as possible.

H_1: There is a relationship between Employee Participation and Employee Performance.

H_1: There is a relationship between Openness to Communication and Employee performance.

H_1: There is a relationship between Risk Taking - Innovation and Employee Performance.

H_1: There is a relationship between Customer Service Orientation and Employee Performance.

H_1: There is a relationship between Reward System and Employee Performance.

3. Research Methodology

This research is aimed at finding the influence of organizational culture on performance of employees working in banking sector of Pakistan. For the purpose of this study culture is taken as independent variable. Performance is taken as dependent variable. In order to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the culture, certain parameters have been taken. Similarly, important manifestations have been taken to capture the performance. The study uses mostly secondary data / information which are available in the form of books, articles, reports, news items etc. internet sources have also been used extensively wherever required. Efforts have been made to collect primary data through questionnaires, informal interviews and personal observations. The measurement of observable culture includes only the observation of dress code and office settings at banking sector, which will only be a small portion of analysis. For measuring core culture a questionnaire, which is composed of 20 Likert scale items across 5 cultural dimensions participation, rewards, customer service, innovation & risk taking and communication. The questionnaire provides five options to the respondents ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The second questionnaire measures the employee's performance. This questionnaire also has a rating scale that ranges from 'outstanding performance' to 'unsatisfactory performance'. It consists of 14 questions related to critical dimensions of both task and contextual performance. We have distributed 200 questionnaires. Fully completed received questionnaire were 150. Hence the response rate is 75%. Convenience sampling method was used to test the study. Since the study aimed at finding the influence of culture on performance of employees therefore the Regression Analysis has been applied.

4. Results and Analysis

The results indicate that employee participation has positive impact on performance of employees. In Durbin's (1982) view, participation includes employee involvement in setting goals. As according to goal setting theory

participation increases goal acceptance. Due to this goal acceptance the employees work more hard to achieve them than those who are simply assigned goals. Thus when employees make best use of their resources, their performance will enhance. McGregor states that participation is not just a group process of expressing democratic ideas but it also involves delegating tasks and responsibilities to individual subordinates.

Similarly the results indicate that employee performance is enhanced by increasing openness to communication. Effective communication is a basic prerequisite for the attainment of organizational objectives. Some estimates of its use to go up to about three-fourths of an active human being's life and even higher proportion of as manager's work. Effective communication is so important that its ineffectiveness may result in industrial disputes, rumors, miscommunication and organizational conflicts Luthans (1998). Fundamentally, organizations are systems that are formed by networks of communication linking people and resources and giving their relationships and interactions meaning, shape and direction. Most organizational work is accomplished by people stating or listening messages, raising or answering questions, issuing or following directions, presenting or fulfilling requests, making commitment Cloke and Goldsmith (2002).

A key to the whole attitude for an organization revolves around its reward practices. Because of this, job attitudes such as job satisfaction can be utilized as a set of indicators of and organization's ability to motivate its employees. The explanatory variable reward system and dependent variable performance of employees are significantly positively correlated. Different theories have recognized the need of rewards in influencing performance in a number of different ways. For Maslow and Alfred, rewards should satisfy the lower needs as well as Herzberg's hygiene factors. According to McClelland the rewards should be designed to provide the reinforcement that a worker most desires and value. The equity theory suggests that the rewards should pass the test of equality, both in comparison to other organizations and within the organization itself. The reinforcement theory states that the rewards should be used to reinforce appropriate behaviors only and reinforces for undesirable performance should be removed Bovee et al, (1993).

Risk taking and innovation has significant negative association with employee performance. Whereas customer service orientation does not appear to have a significant influence on employee performance.

5. Conclusion

The article attempts to investigate the influence of organizational culture on performance of employees of banking sector in Pakistan. The descriptive pattern is used in the study and data is collected through questionnaires. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to personnel and company officers by mail and through personal visits. We received back 150 questionnaires indicating a response rate of 75%. Questionnaires, comprising two parts were sent directly to the targeted segments. The 1st set of Questions pertained to personal and organizational profiles. Second part consisted of twenty questions based on the Denison organizational culture survey concerning employee participation, openness to communication, risk-taking & innovation, customer service orientation and reward system. And the last part related to fourteen questions of employee performance. Regression analysis has been used in the study. The overall model is significant and organizational culture has strong linkage with the employee performance. The study highlights the organizational culture is a vital ingredient in the success of employees. Core organizational culture typically emphasizes special themes such as performance excellence, effective integration, worker's involvement, and orientation towards organizational objectives.

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Correlations Matrix

	EP	OC	RTI	CSO	RS	EPR
EP	1					
OC	.788**	1				
RTI	.732**	.652**	1			
CSO	.811**	.675**	.801**	1		
RS	.512**	.298**	.701**	.495**	1	
EPR	.599**	.524**	.302**	.523**	.254**	1

** *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Demographic Profile

Statistics

		M. Status	Gender	Qualification	Experience	Age
N	Valid	150	150	150	150	150
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0

Frequency Table

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	59	39.3	39.3	39.3
	Unmarried	91	60.7	60.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	114	76.0	76.0	76.0
	Female	36	24.0	24.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelors	41	27.4	27.4	27.4
	Masters	71	47.3	47.3	74.7
	Mphill / MS	29	19.3	19.3	94.0
	Doctoral	9	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1yr	20	13.3	13.3	13.3
	1 to 2 Yrs	46	30.7	30.7	44.0
	2 to 3 Yrs	59	39.3	39.3	83.3
	More than 3 Yrs	25	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2o to 30 Yrs	82	54.7	54.7	54.7
	30 to 40 Yrs	32	21.3	21.3	76.0
	40 to 50 Yrs	23	15.3	15.3	91.3
	50 and above	13	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Regressions

Variables Entered / Removed (b)

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	RS, OC, CSO, RTI, EP(a)	.	Enter

a. All requested variables entered.

b. Dependent Variable: EPR

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Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.662(a)	.438	.417	.35164

a. Predictors: (Constant), RS, OC, CSO, RTI, EP

ANOVA (b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.913	5	2.583	20.887	.000(a)
	Residual	16.569	134	.124		
	Total	29.482	139			

a. Predictors: (Constant), RS, OC, CSO, RTI, EP

b. Dependent Variable: EPR

Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.625	.254		7.452
	EP	.410	.147	.829	3.625
	OC	.032	.062	.091	1.854
	RTI	-.512	.087	-.515	-4.234
	CSO	.212	.069	.170	1.421
	RS	.321	.081	.161	1.924

a. Dependent Variable: EPR